



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
HEADQUARTERS 88TH AIR BASE WING (AFMC)  
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE OHIO

26 OCT 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL WPAFB PERSONNEL

FROM: 88 FSS/FSM

SUBJECT: Hazardous Weather Closings

1. Another winter will soon be upon us, and winter brings the threat of hazardous weather which could affect the operating hours of the base. It is important to remind all base organizations of the procedures followed when administrative leave is approved because of snow or other adverse weather. As in the past, the procedures are based on the principle that the mission of the installation is vital to serving our customers throughout the region and that we must do so without compromising the safety of our employees and resources. Please review this guidance carefully.

2. If a decision for early release is made during normal duty hours, it is transmitted to all base organizations via phone calls, e-mail, text messaging, and pop-up messages. Notifications may also be made by using either telephone backup systems or runners as described in WPAFBI 36-802, *Release of Personnel Due to Hazardous Weather or Emergency Conditions*. During normal off-duty time, decisions regarding delayed arrival or base closure will be transmitted via radio, television, and web site announcements. A list of these radio and television stations can be found on the Civilian Personnel web page at: <https://www.civpersonnel.wpafb.af.mil/>

3. The standard public news release will state:

a. Wright-Patterson AFB is closed. Employees are excused from duty today, except those personnel who are designated base-essential.

b. Wright-Patterson AFB employees are on an up to a \_\_\_\_ hour delay this morning, except those personnel who are designated base-essential.

c. Wright-Patterson AFB employees are authorized an early departure beginning at \_\_\_\_ local today, except those personnel who are designated base essential. Commanders will use a disciplined staggered release to reduce congestion. Please use all outbound traffic lanes when exiting the gates. The museum gate will be open to facilitate the release.

d. Wright-Patterson AFB employees are to report for duty no earlier than \_\_\_\_ except those personnel who are designated base-essential.

4. We have found that this clear and simple communication gets the word out quickly and accurately. To ensure that the mission requirements of the base are adequately covered, it is necessary that those limited number of employees required to continue work be advised, as far in

advance as possible, as to their base-essential designation. If this is done properly, the above standard notice will successfully notify all personnel and eliminate the need for phone calls and confusion. Of course, if the planned news release does not fit the conditions, modified instructions will be issued.

5. Military and/or civilian base-essential personnel are defined as "personnel required to maintain the minimum base operating functions." Some examples include, but are not limited to, emergency room staff, medical response providers, fire department, Security Forces Squadron, dining facility, and hospital patient care. Organizational commanders/directors must determine and assign base-essential status to only those personnel critical to performing the mission during periods of hazardous weather conditions. Those individuals should be notified in advance of their designation as base-essential. Please note that there are no provisions for additional benefits for base-essential employees who are required to work during base closures. Commanders, directors, and supervisors must emphasize the importance of strict adherence to reporting instructions and times. While safety of our people is our #1 concern, our secondary focus for establishing these guidelines is to permit proper snow and ice removal from our streets and parking lots.

6. The primary purpose for granting administrative leave during adverse weather conditions is to allow additional time for civilian employees to come to work or travel home from work safely. If it were simply a matter of convenience, administrative leave would probably never be considered. However, when road conditions are hazardous, traffic slows considerably. Granting administrative leave during inclement weather allows the workforce to take needed precautions when dangerous driving conditions prevail. When early release is authorized, employees will be dismissed as provided in the release announcement (that is, the number of hours excused subtracted from their normal departure time).

7. Attached is a list of questions and answers which may be of help in administering the program. If you have additional questions regarding administrative leave due to inclement weather for civilian employees, please refer to your servicing Human Resources Specialist (Employee Relations), 88 FSS/FSMCZ, extension 72411.



GERALD L. STRYKER  
Chief, Manpower and Personnel Flight

Attachment:  
Questions and Answers

## HAZARDOUS WEATHER CLOSINGS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Q. What area radio/television stations does WPAFB notify to broadcast base closure or delayed reporting information?

A. The base will contact all of the following stations:

a. FM Radio Stations: WCDR (90.3), WYSO (91.3), WVMX (91.7) WROU (92.1), WCOL (92.3), WOFX (92.5), WGTZ (92.9), WFCJ (93.7), WVMX (94.1), WDKF (Kiss 94.5), WZLR (Eagle 95.3), WHIO (95.7), WBNS (97.1), WNCI 97.9 FM, WHKO (K99.1), WLQT (99.9), WEBN (102.7), WDHT (102.9), WTUE (104.7), WDSJ (106.5), WMMX (107.7).

b. AM Radio Stations: WKRC (550), WTVN (610), WONE (980), WGNZ (1110), WCOL (1230), WHIO (1290), WIZE (1340), WING (1410), WBNS (1460), WBZI (1500).

c. Television Stations: WHIO-TV Channel 7 (CBS Dayton), WDTN-TV Channel 2 (NBC Dayton), WKEF-TV Channel 22 (ABC Dayton), WRGT-TV Channel 45 (FOX Dayton), WKRC-TV Channel 12 (CBS Cincinnati), WBNS Channel 10 (CBS Columbus)

Base status information is posted online at the following public, off-base website, <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/>. Additionally, base status information can be obtained by calling (937) 656-SNOW (7669).

WPAFB Alerts & Notices (Self-Subscription Service) are posted online at the following website <https://lava.wpafb.af.mil/installation-messages/ManageSubscriptions.asp>.

2. Q. What is the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Alerts & Notice (Self-Subscription Service)?

A. The Self-Subscription Service allows you to self-subscribe to receive Wright-Patterson AFB Alerts & Notices on up to 3 e-mail addresses of your choice. Subscriptions are voluntary. Your service provider may charge you for messages you receive. Your subscription may also include e-mail addresses for wireless devices with text messaging features enabled.

**Note:** Wright-Patterson AFB is not responsible for any expenses incurred. Please contact your wireless service provider to obtain the e-mail address for your wireless device if needed. You may encounter delays receiving these messages due to off-base e-mail system settings and limitations.

3. Q. What is base-essential designation?

A. Base-essential personnel are individuals required to maintain minimum base operating functions (e.g., force protection, fire protection, medical response, emergency room, command center, civil engineering, hospital patient care, key intelligence personnel (NASIC), dining facility, flightline support).

4. Q. Who decides who is base-essential?

A. Organizational commanders must approve such designations but will rely on their supervisory structure for recommendations. If in doubt as to your status, discuss it with your supervisor.

5. Q. Do base-essential civilian personnel receive additional compensation when they are required to work after the bulk of the workforce has been dismissed?

A. No. There are no alternative forms of compensation available for those base-essential personnel who are required to work during a base closure due to inclement weather. Additional forms of compensation apply when employees work more than eight hours a day (or more than their scheduled number of hours) or more than 40 hours a week. In this case, overtime pay or compensable time off may be appropriate. These are the normal provisions for compensating employees for overtime. Current pay regulations covering this are based on federal law and cannot be modified.

6. Q. How are WPAFB employees notified that they are base-essential?

A. In accordance with WPAFBI 36-810, *Designation of Base Essential Personnel*, it is the responsibility of the first level supervisor to inform an employee, in writing, that they are designated as base-essential when the employee is first assigned to the position. Employees will be reminded annually, in writing, that they encumber a base-essential position by the organizational commander.

7. Q. A civilian employee is unable to report for duty because of weather or road conditions, and the base is open for normal business. What kind of leave should be charged to the employee?

A. Air Force Instruction 36-815, paragraph 7.6, provides direction to commanders on how to charge absences under hazardous weather conditions. When the base is open for business and employees are unable to report for work, they may request to be placed in a leave category such as annual leave, leave without pay, compensatory time, or credit hours.

8. Q. The base is initially open, but subsequently closes and employees at work, except for base-essential personnel, are released early on administrative leave; civilian personnel not at work are charged leave. Why aren't all civilian employees put on administrative leave?

A. Air Force Instruction 36-815, paragraph 7.6, provides direction for group dismissals of employees under adverse weather conditions without charge to leave. Under this instruction, only employees who are in a duty status at the time early dismissal takes effect are excused without charge to leave. Employees who are absent that day continue to be charged leave. Employees in a duty status who depart on leave prior to the early dismissal, but after official word is received, are charged only from the time of departure until the time set for dismissal. However, certain Federal Wage System (FWS) employees serving under a temporary appointment may not be granted administrative leave. When the base is closed for the entire shift, all employees, except those determined to be base-essential, are excused including those who are on previously approved leave, provided they are in a pay status either the day preceding or the day following the day of excused absence. Base-essential employees are only excused

without charge to leave when they are in an approved leave status for their entire shift and their supervisor does not require them to report for duty.

9. Q. An up to two-hour delay in reporting is announced over the radio. What does this mean?

A. Although employees may be excused up to the time specified for delayed reporting, the objective is to ensure that all personnel are allotted extra time to get to work safely in the face of poor travel conditions. Therefore, employees who can safely report to their duty station at their normal time, or shortly thereafter, are expected to do so. When a blanket approval for delayed arrival is issued, each employee must use good judgment, reporting for work as soon as possible.

10. Q. Who makes the decision to grant administrative leave in the event of hazardous weather?

A. The 88th Air Base Wing Commander (88 ABW/CC) decides whether to dismiss employees in the event of hazardous weather. Before making this decision, the 88 ABW/CC consults major tenant commanders and the Security Forces Squadron who obtain reports from base, city, county, or state agencies relative to particular situations which might affect the health and safety of employees.

11. Q. What is the status of contract employees when federal employees are released due to hazardous weather?

A. The decision as to whether contract employees will continue to work or be released is made by each contractor and the respective contracting office at the time administrative leave is authorized for federal employees by the 88 ABW/CC. Contract employees need to review their contracts concerning the procedures to follow for early departure, late arrival, and base closings. Each contract may vary as to when an employee will be granted early departure or late arrival during hazardous weather. The decision to pay employees for administrative leave will also depend upon the agreement with the employer. To avoid confusion, contract employees should review the procedure on hazardous weather with their supervisor as soon as possible.

12. Q. When an announcement is made to report to duty no earlier than a designated hour, i.e., 1000, what exactly does that mean?

A. The reason for employees being told not to report to duty before a designated hour is to allow road crews to clear the roads and walkways for base personnel to enter the parking lots and buildings. Individuals should report to work as soon after the designated hour as possible.

13. Q. What are the three levels of snow emergencies and what do they mean?

A. The Greene County Sheriff's Office has provided the following explanation of the snow emergencies:

Level 1 - Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads are also icy. Drive very cautiously.

Level 2 - Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roadways. Contact your employer to see if you should report to work.

Level 3 - All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be out during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel. All employees should contact their employer to see if they should report to work. Those traveling on the roadways may subject themselves to citation or arrest.

14. Q. If I am designated base-essential because of my position or duty location, i.e., firefighter, base hospital; the base is closed for business, and my county is under a Level 3 snow emergency, should I report for duty?

A. Base-essential personnel should report to work at their regularly scheduled duty time if directed to do so.

15. Q. What is the procedure if the hazardous weather occurs outside of normal duty hours (0600-1800) or normal duty days (Monday-Friday)?

A. Upon determination by the 88 ABW/CC that the base should be closed or that delayed arrival or early departure is appropriate for employees not designated base-essential, the AFMC Command Center, through the Automated Notification System, will contact organizational focal points. These focal points will in turn provide the appropriate information to the employees who are working. Organizations that have employees regularly working outside of normal duty hours/days should ensure that the phone number for their organizational focal points are in the ANS for this purpose by contacting the AFMC Command Center. Questions regarding weather delays, excused absence, etc., **must** be directed to the employee's supervisor. The AFMC Command Center number should only be used by employees whose work schedules are outside normal duty days/hours to verify if the base is open or closed. The AFMC Command Center cannot provide direction to employees and will not provide information beyond the open/closed status of the base.